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LETTER DATED 22 NOVEMBER 1993 FROM THE PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF IRAQ TO THE UNITED NATIONS ADDRESSED TO THE SECRETARY-GENERAL

On instructions from my Government, I have the honour to transmit to you herewith a letter dated 17 November 1993 from Mr. Mohammed Said Al-Sahaf, Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Iraq, concerning the decisions adopted in the name of the Sanctions Committee established by Security Council resolution 661 (1990) at its 103rd meeting.

I request the circulation of this letter as a document of the Security Council.

Accept, Sir, the assurances of my highest consideration.

(Signed) Nizar HAMDOON
Ambassador
Permanent Representative

Annex

Letter dated 17 November 1993 from the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Iraq addressed to the Secretary-General

I should like to call your attention to the decisions adopted by the Sanctions Committee established by Security Council resolution 661 (1990) at its 103rd meeting. At that meeting, the representatives of the United States, the United Kingdom and France once again obliged the Committee to adopt decisions aimed at perpetuating the iniquitous embargo imposed on the Iraqi people, even with respect to the basic civilian and humanitarian fields for which exceptions were made in the Security Council resolutions. They did so in order to achieve the self-seeking and narrow political goals of the countries in question while ignoring the suffering their decisions create for the long-suffering Iraqi people. The reason that prompts me to address you once again on the matter of the decisions adopted in the name of this Committee is that, after each of its meetings, I find that the representatives of these three countries have persisted in imposing decisions that have the aim of inflicting further damage on our people and our country in violation of the Charter of the United Nations. We have noted that, at recent meetings, they have proceeded to take no account of the precedents established for the work of the Committee and to show intransigence with regard to a number of humanitarian items similar to those the Committee has approved on previous occasions. At the meeting in question, this caused a number of those representatives of States members of the Committee who have no preconceived political objectives, particularly the representatives of China and Morocco, to object to this selectivity.

Below are some indicative but by no means exhaustive examples of the requests that were rejected, by the representatives of the United States and the United Kingdom in particular, at the meeting in question.

1. The representative of the United Kingdom objected to the export to Iraq of used plastic injection machinery for caustic soda for use in the soap industry on the grounds that it was an input to industry. It must surely be obvious to you that soap is a basic civilian item that has a direct impact on the health of Iraqi citizens and that the Security Council resolutions do not prohibit its supply. We are of the view that the objection to these items by the representative of the United Kingdom is an example of selective rejection aimed at increasing the suffering of Iraqi citizens and depriving them of the necessities of life.

2. The representative of the United Kingdom also objected to the supply of brakes for agricultural tractors. The representative of Morocco in the Committee took exception to this, because such items have a connection with agricultural production. You are well aware that these items are of a basic civilian character and make a direct contribution to the agricultural production process and to ensuring food security for the Iraqi people. We can only view the objection of the representative of the United Kingdom as unwarranted and interpret it as having the objective of hampering Iraq's efforts to provide food for all of its citizens in the circumstances of a blanket economic embargo.

Clearly, the Government of the United Kingdom is adopting ignoble positions with a view to the maintenance of the iniquitous embargo against Iraq and is doing so in a vengeful manner that has to do with the continued existence of the United Kingdom's outworn colonialist perception of the Iraqi people.

3. The representatives of the United States and of the United Kingdom objected to the export to Iraq of copper pipes for refrigeration equipment on the grounds that they would serve the country's industrial base. This objection is an example of the diligence shown in depriving the Iraqi people of essential and basic civilian items in their daily lives. As you know, Iraq has a severe summer climate, so that refrigeration and air-conditioning are essential in all areas of life and particularly for the storage of vaccines and foodstuffs and for household uses.

4. The representatives of the United States and the United Kingdom objected to the export to Iraq of water taps, fans and paper products, all of which are basic civilian items that have no military use and no uses that are prohibited even under the iniquitous Security Council resolutions. We see this objection as having no other purpose than to increase the burden of the blanket embargo imposed on the Iraqi people in order to achieve an objective that will inevitably fail, namely that of attempting to undermine stability and harass an industrious people from whose memory such hostile positions as those taken by the United States and the United Kingdom will never be effaced.

5. The representative of the United Kingdom objected to the export to Iraq of pesticides, despite the fact that they are a finished product used for civilian health-related purposes. They are used to maintain the health of Iraqi citizens and ensure a safe environment, and we associate ourselves with the question asked by the representative of Morocco: Do Iraqi citizens not have the right to preserve their health and their safe environment by means of pest control?

The insistence of the representatives of the United States and the United Kingdom at this meeting on rejecting requests for the supply of items of a civilian and humanitarian character proves that the policy of maintaining the embargo and increasing its burden on the Iraqi people is, in reality, no more than an unprincipled means of achieving preconcerted political goals to the detriment of our people and not a means of ensuring the implementation of the resolutions of the Security Council. The Committee's action is thereby made to go far beyond the purposes for which it was established. We once again affirm that the continued operation of the Committee in its present manner will mar the reputation of the United Nations and cause peoples to lose all confidence in it. For this reason you must closely examine the nature of the objections raised by the representatives of the United States and the United Kingdom. You will find that they stem from self-seeking and narrow policies that bear no relation to the common interests of the international community.

I request you to have this letter circulated as a document of the United Nations.

Accept, Sir, the assurances of my highest consideration.

(Signed) Mohammed Said AL-SAHAF
Minister for Foreign Affairs
of the Republic of Iraq

Baghdad, 17 November 1993